

Message Text

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E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. GVN PLANS TO REQUEST SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PARACELS

THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) PLANS TO ASK THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL JANUARY 21 TO CONVENE AN IMMEDIATE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO CONSIDER THE "AGGRESSION" BY THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN THE PARACEL ISLANDS. USUN COMMENTS THAT THE GVN WOULD SEEM TO HAVE NO CHANCE OF A FAVORABLE SECURITY COUNCIL DECISION ON THE PARACELS ISSUE AND BELIEVES SAIGON SHOULD BE MADE AWARE OF THE UNTENABLE POSITION THE GVN WOULD HAVE IN THE COUNCIL. (CONFIDENTIAL) USUN 188 AND 189 AND SAIGON 868, 1/20.

2. PRC EXECUTING WELL PLANNED OPERATION TO SEIZE PARACELS

EMBASSY SAIGON REPORTS THAT PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (PRC) AIRCRAFT BOMBED AND PRC NAVAL VESSELS SHELLS MONEY, ROBERT, AND PATTLE ISLANDS IN THE PARACELS IN WHAT APPEARS TO BE A WELL PLANNED OPERATION TO SEIZE THE ISLANDS.
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VIETNAMESE NAVY HEADQUARTERS HAS ORDERED COASTAL VESSELS IN THE AREA TO WITHDRAW, AND THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) HAS NO PLANS TO REINFORCE OR EXTRACT THE VIETNAMESE

TROOPS LEFT ON THE ISLANDS. THE EMBASSY IS DOING EVERY-
THING POSSIBLE TO RESTRAIN THE VIETNAMESE AND CONTINUES
TO BELIEVE THAT US MILITARY FORCE IS NOT REMOTELY DESIRABLE
IN THIS SITUATION. MEANWHILE, THE NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY
HAS CHARGED THE "SAIGON AUTHORITIES" WITH "UNSCRUPULOUS
PROVOCATION" AND WARNS "THEY ARE BOUND TO EAT THEIR OWN
BITTER FRUIT." (SECRET) SAIGON 862 AND 863 AND HONG KONG
769, 1/20.

3. CAIRO PRESS REFLECTS OPTIMISM ON "MILITARY" AGREEMENT

JANUARY 19 CAIRO NEWSPAPERS CARRIED MAJOR ARTICLES ON
THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE DISENGAGEMENT OF
FORCES AND REFLECTED OPTIMISM THAT A SIGNIFICANT STEP
HAD BEEN TAKEN TOWARD A SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST
CONFLICT. THE TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT WHICH APPEARED IN
THE PRESS DIFFERED FROM THE ACTUAL TEXT IN SEVERAL
PLACES, AND USINT CAIRO COMMENTS THAT THE INTENT APPEARS
TO BE TO DISGUISE THE FACT THAT THE GOE HAS AGREED TO
LIMIT ARMAMENT AND FORCES IN SPECIFIED ZONES. (CONFIDEN-
TIAL) CAIRO 300 AND 306, 1/20 (EXDIS).

4. ASAD LISTS HIS TERMS FOR ATTENDANCE AT GENEVA

MR. SCOTES IN DAMASCUS LEARNED THROUGH THE ITALIAN AMBAS-
SADOR THAT DURING THE LAST THREE OR FOUR WEEKS BREZHNEV
HAS SENT THREE LETTERS TO PRESIDENT ASAD STRESSING THAT
DETENTE IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE ARABS AND URGING
SYRIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. ASAD RE-
PLIED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO GO TO GENEVA, BUT, IN ORDER TO
WITHSTAND OPPOSITION PRESSURES, HE FIRST NEEDS "A PERSONAL
SUCCESS" CONSISTING OF: 1) ISRAELI AGREEMENT TO GIVE UP,
IN EXCHANGE FOR A LIST OF ISRAELI PRISONERS, THREE STRATE-
GIC POSITIONS ON MT. HERMON OCCUPIED AFTER OCTOBER 22, AND
2) ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO THE 1967 TRUCE LINES IN EXCHANGE
FOR SYRIAN RETURN OF WOUNDED ISRAELI PRISONERS. (CONFI-
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DENTIAL) DAMASCUS 11, 1/19 (EXDIS).

5. SAUDI-SUDANESE OIL ACCORD REPORTED

ACCORDING TO AMBASSADOR BREWER, SUDAN AND SAUDI ARABIA HAVE
REACHED AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON OIL WHICH WOULD MEET
SUDANESE DOMESTIC REQUIREMENTS AND FURNISH ADDITIONAL CRUDE
FOR A REFINERY TO BE BUILT AT PORT SUDAN. KEY SUDANESE
NEGOTIATOR IDRIS MET WITH KING FAISAL ON JANUARY 16 AND
SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH THE KING WAS AWARE OF THE IMMINENT DIS-
ENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, HE WAS NOT YET PREPARED TO RETURN TO
NORMAL OIL PRODUCTION. AMBASSADOR BREWER COMMENTS THAT IN

RETURN FOR THE NEW OIL AGREEMENT, THE SUDANESE WILL BE IN-

CLINED TO HELP KING FAISAL ATTAIN HIS INTERNATIONAL OBJECTIVES. (SECRET) KHARTOUM 111, 1/19 (EXDIS).

6. INDIA INTERESTED IN US OIL EXPLORATION HELP

INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SWARAN SINGH TOLD AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN IN NEW DELHI THAT INDIA WAS "VERY SERIOUS" ABOUT HAVING AMERICAN COMPANIES SEARCH FOR OIL IN INDIA ON A "MODIFIED PATTERN." THE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED HIS SKEPTICISM, BUT URGED THE INDIANS TO FIND A WAY TO SAY SO IN SPECIFIC TERMS TO A SPECIFIC FIRM. THE FOREIGN MINISTER ALSO SAID THAT THE ARABS, WHATEVER THEIR PUBLIC POSTURE, ARE CLEARLY SYMPATHETIC TO THE US. (CONFIDENTIAL) NEW DELHI 949, 1/20 (LIMDIS).

7. PERON ADOPTS TOUGH STANCE IN WAKE OF TERRORIST ATTACK

IN A NATIONALLY TELEVISED SPEECH JANUARY 20, ARGENTINE PRESIDENT JUAN PERON SHARPLY CONDEMNED THE TERRORIST ATTACK ON THE AZUL ARMY GARRISON AND SAID ALL FORCE NECESSARY WILL BE USED TO PROTECT THE COUNTRY'S INSTITUTIONS. THE AZUL GARRISON, 150 MILES SOUTH OF BUENOS AIRES, WAS STRUCK ON THE NIGHT OF JANUARY 19 BY 60 TO 70 TERRORISTS POSING AS SOLDIERS. AT LEAST FIVE PERSONS, INCLUDING AN ARMY COLONEL AND HIS WIFE, WERE KILLED IN THE ATTACK. USDAO BUENOS AIRES COMMENTS THAT THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY ARMY (THE TERRORIST GROUP BELIEVED SECRET

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TO HAVE BEEN BEHIND THE ATTACK) IS TRYING TO PROVOKE PERON INTO TAKING TOUGH MEASURES WHICH IT HOPES WILL ALIENATE THE PEOPLE FROM THE GOVERNMENT. (CONFIDENTIAL) USDAO BUENOS AIRES, 210415Z.

8. FRANCE FLOATS FRANC AGAINST OTHER "SNAKE" CURRENCIES

FOLLOWING AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE FRENCH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS JANUARY 19, THE GOF SUSPENDED FOR SIX MONTHS MANDATORY INTERVENTION BY THE BANK OF FRANCE ON THE EXCHANGE MARKET. FINANCE MINISTER GISCARD D'ESTAING JUSTIFIED THE FRENCH DECISION TO FLOAT THE FRANC BY SAYING THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO CHANCE OF ANY REFORM OF THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY SYSTEM EITHER IN 1974 OR 1975. FURTHERMORE, HE ADDED THAT, IN VIEW OF THE OIL CRISIS, A COUNTRY WHICH TRIES TO DEFEND ITS CURRENCY AT A FIXED RATE WOULD EXPOSE ITSELF TO HEAVY RESERVE LOSSES. COMMENTATORS SAY THE BANK OF FRANCE PROBABLY LOST BETWEEN \$400 AND \$600 MILLION LAST WEEK TRYING TO KEEP THE COMMERCIAL FRANC WITHIN THE EUROPEAN MONETARY "SNAKE." (UNCLASSIFIED) PARIS 1654, 1/19.

9. BELGIAN GOVERNMENT RESIGNS

BELGIAN PRIME MINISTER LEBURTON SUBMITTED HIS CABINET'S RESIGNATION JANUARY 19 IN THE WAKE OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE BELGIAN-IRANIAN "IBRAMCO" OIL REFINERY PROJECT. THE OSTENSIBLE REASON FOR THE RESIGNATION WAS THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S (PSB) FEELING THAT THE OTHER TWO GOVERNMENT PARTIES WERE STALLING ON THE PROJECT; HOWEVER, OTHER PARTIES BELIEVE SUCH A STRONG REACTION INDICATES THE PSB FEELS NEW ELECTIONS WOULD STRENGTHEN ITS POSITION. EMBASSY BRUSSELS COMMENTS THAT THE FALL OF THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE MINIMAL EFFECT ON US INTERESTS. (CONFIDENTIAL) BRUSSELS 340, 1/19. KISSINGER

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